

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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SECURITY INFORMATION

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THE SOURCE EVALUATIONS IN THIS REPORT ARE DEFINITIVE.
THE APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.
(FOR KEY SEE REVERSE)

SOURCE

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Population

1. In November 1945, there were only a few Russian and Lithuanian civilians on the streets of Klaipeda, Lithuanian SSR. One mainly saw military forces from Central Asia. The original German inhabitants of Memel (former name of Klaipeda) were afraid to speak German for fear of being arrested or deported. This fear was evident until 1949. Until 1949, most of the persons returning to Klaipeda from Germany became Lithuanian citizens. Source believes they did this because they were afraid of being deported to Siberia. Only a few retained their German nationality. Nevertheless, source states that, by talking to those who became Lithuanian citizens, one can see that they have not forgotten Germany.
2. Source estimates that, at present, approximately 60 percent of the inhabitants of Klaipeda are Russian, and about 20 percent of these Russians are Jewish. There are between two and three thousand Germans in Klaipeda and its surrounding area.

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(Note: Washington Distribution Indicated By "X", Field Distribution By "#")

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3. Source states that the original German inhabitants of the Memel Territory (Memellaenders) have no rights now. Their homes have been occupied by Russians and Lithuanians, and the Memellaenders have to live in quarters "not worthy of a human being." The Germans earn their living by sweeping streets and by working in the dockyard and the fishery. Some, source points out, are able to establish nice new homes of their own, but the average worker has no chance to make new purchases.
4. Social relations between Russians, Lithuanians, and Memellaenders in the years 1945-1950 depended upon the individuals, but in general were poor. Memellaenders had to work from early morning until late at night to earn a living, and they were paid in food instead of money. According to source, the statement that the Memellaenders would have starved had it not been for the Lithuanians is only partly correct. The Russians partly understood the misery of the Memellaenders, though they helped only if they could put such help to their own advantage. On the average, the Russians like the Germans in Klaipeda better than they like the Lithuanians. However, source believes this feeling is aroused because the Germans do not defend themselves and are afraid to protest, whereas the Lithuanians often resist the Russians. Source believes that those Lithuanians who did not sympathize with the Soviet system have gone to the West (sic). The others, those who now have power in their hands, are proven Bolsheviks and it is they who hate the Germans most.
5. More Russian is heard on the streets of Klaipeda than Lithuanian. The Russians live isolated from others, but there is no real Russian settlement in Klaipeda. Russians obtain apartments and jobs before others do. They do all kinds of work and are employed in all offices. The supervisor of street cleaners is always a Russian. Russian disabled veterans have the right to be night watchmen in the shops and to carry weapons. In winter, poor Russians wear padded trousers and jackets and canvas shoes. Party members and those Russians who have been in the West try to dress better and most of them wear boots. Russian women use make-up. Russians praise life in the other republics but, when they are asked why they have come to Lithuania, they remain silent.
6. No one ever mentions the Lithuanian refugees who are in Germany. No one knows what they are doing and no one thinks they have any significance. The Lithuanians speak only about the American Lithuanians and wonder whether they have forgotten their native country and whether they would help Lithuania. Source believes that the Lithuanians are adopting the Communist spirit. Lithuanians are speaking more and more Russian in public. They no longer dance their own folk dances but have Soviet ones instead. They sing Soviet songs and use Russian curses.

Appearance and Reconstruction

7. Source estimates that 50 percent of Klaipeda was destroyed in the war. In November 1945, streets were covered with ruins and most of them were impassable. Buildings which remained standing had no windows, doors, or floors and were dirty and bug-ridden. The Klaipeda suburb of Vite was totally destroyed. All that remained standing in Bommelsvite (part of Klaipeda) were several houses. The Klaipeda railroad station was only slightly damaged and has since been completely rebuilt.
8. The first impression of Klaipeda is that everything is being rebuilt. However, after some time one sees that buildings are being repaired and rebuilt only for use by the Party, Russians, and Lithuanians. All construction work is being done by the Government, i.e., by the lodging office (Butu Valdyba). Russian, Lithuanian, and German specialists have been working on these construction projects, and they receive 500 to 600 rubles per month. No private construction is allowed. A person can repair his own apartment; and, when he does, it is not necessary for him to pay rent for several months.

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9. About one-third of the destroyed houses in Klaipeda have been replaced. Houses which were slightly damaged have been rebuilt, but source believes they will not last long. The work was done according to norms, and the materials allocated to this work got into the wrong hands through illicit trade. Therefore, only the worst materials were used. Plaster is already falling from the rebuilt houses. Several dwellings have been constructed in Smelte (Klaipeda suburb). A large new public bath has been constructed in Simano Dacho Street, between Gruene Street and Gr. Sand Street, in an area where all the buildings were destroyed during the war. An apartment house for officers has been built on Palangas Street, near where it is crossed by the street on which is located the former Preussischer Hof Hotel. Two blocks on Kanto Street have been rebuilt for use by the Naval School. A new dormitory for pupils of the Naval School is located on the site of the former Gestapo building. Several new houses and three villas have been constructed on Sportininku Street (formerly Veit Street).
10. All the larger buildings which were not destroyed in the war are now occupied by Russians and Lithuanians as offices and living quarters. Official buildings in Klaipeda include the following: Officers' Club, State Bank, former German Bank, Trade Bank, City Revenue Office, Land Revenue Office, and the Post and Traffic Association. Hindenburg Square is now called Lenin Square and has a Russian monument. There are no German monuments left. From Werft Street to Dange Street (where formerly there were buildings) there is now a park with a monument to Stalin. There is a monument to Lenin at the Steintor and a Lenin bust in front of the theater.
11. As of April 1951, the condition of Klaipeda streets was very good. Ruins had been cleared away and street repairs had been made. Most of the clearing of debris was done by Germans. Street names in Klaipeda appear on oval plates and are in Russian on top and in Lithuanian beneath.¹ Most of them bear the names of Russian partisans. Simano Dacho Street has retained its prewar name. Roads and highways outside the Klaipeda city boundaries are in very bad condition, with the exception of the highway to Kretinga, Plunge (55-55N, 21-50E), and Telsiai (55-59N, 21-15E). Repairs on roads are made from time to time, but the work does not last long.

Transportation

12. Buses in Klaipeda are overcrowded and passengers do not keep order. Sometimes, passengers have to wait a whole hour before getting a bus. By contrast, in Vilnius, there is better order; buses are punctual and passengers wait their turn.
13. Until 1945, the railroads were only partly in operation. Old coaches and rebuilt freight cars were used. Between 1947 and 1951, conditions improved. Now coaches are renovated, well-lighted, and have radio equipment. Freight cars are no longer used to carry passengers. Along the way, one can still see railroad equipment that was damaged during the war. Traffic is regular and punctual. Trains are overcrowded with persons traveling on official orders. Priorities for train travel are given in the following order:
 - a. Military men with rank of general to captain
 - b. All other military officers and men
 - c. Deputies
 - d. Communist Party members
 - e. Persons on travel orders
 - f. Civilians
14. The taxi fare from Klaipeda to Giruliai, a distance of eight kilometers, is 32 rubles. There is no ship traffic between Lithuanian cities and no regular boat transportation to the Nehrung. Only the kolkhozniki use horses for transportation.

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Housing and Electricity

15. When a person moves to a new locality, the factory management or the union where the person works usually finds him living quarters. The average person is allowed to occupy nine square meters of space. However, a friend of source occupied an apartment having one room of 16 square meters and another of eight square meters, for which he paid 45 rubles monthly.
16. Kretinga, Palanga, and Silute receive their electric current from Klaipeda. The supply of electricity in the towns is normal, but there is no electricity in the villages. One kilowatt-hour of electricity costs 0.45 rubles, but most often the current is stolen. If a person is caught doing this, he can avoid punishment by offering whisky as a bribe. A careful person always has a liter of whisky at home and can avoid many misfortunes with it.

Postal System

17. Post offices are now in full operation and mail is delivered by postmen. Out-of-town deliveries take longer than local ones. A letter which source sent to Smelte, a suburb eight kilometers from Klaipeda, took eight days for delivery. Telegrams from Vilnius to Klaipeda take from two and a half to three days, while a simple letter takes only one and a half days. Postal rates in the Lithuanian SSR are as follows: local post cards, 25 kopeks; local letters, 40 kopeks; letters sent abroad, 80 kopeks. Germans in Klaipeda affix a second 25 kopek stamp to local post cards as a precaution. The sender of a letter to a foreign country must write his return address in Russian. Most individuals write their return address in both Russian and Lithuanian.
18. Packages and registered letters must be brought directly to the post office; other letters may be mailed outside the post office. Registered letters take much longer than ordinary mail, sometimes as long as five to seven days. Packages brought to the post office must be open. A postal clerk checks the contents and a note is placed inside indicating the contents of the package and the address of the sender and receiver. The package is then closed in the presence of the postal official and is given over to him. A form called a Paketkarte is sent with the package. Larger parcels must be wrapped in cloth and, after the checking, are sewed up in the presence of the postal official. Lithuanians receiving parcels from abroad must pay 180 rubles duty for every 500 grams, and often the package contains only stones (sic) instead of the announced goods. Source says that Jews receive their packages from abroad free of duty but does not know why this exception is made.²
19. All letters to Klaipeda are checked and it is questionable whether or not they will be allowed to pass. It is better to send post cards to this city since, being open, they have a better chance of going through. Source does not know if all outgoing letters are censored but he is sure that letters chosen at random are checked. When a suspicious letter is found, all other letters mailed from that district are carefully checked and all are then destroyed. Because source wrote in 1948 that he was unemployed, his letters abroad did not go through, nor could he receive any mail from abroad. Other persons have had this experience too, and source believes that such persons are put on the lists for deportation. Mail control centers are in Riga and Vilnius. Source was told by an informant who works as a mail censor that the censorship office has an apparatus capable of making copies of letters which are in closed envelopes.

Radio Facilities

20. Anyone is allowed to buy a radio and to make use of one. In 1951 it was possible to buy German radios of Blaupunkt and Phillips manufacture and Soviet radio sets manufactured in Moscow, including the RAZ-49 and the improved RAZ-50 and RAZ-51. Good radio sets are very expensive. When a person buys a radio, the manager of the shop fills in a receipt, giving the name of the buyer and his address, the serial number of the radio set, and the name of the shop where it is purchased.

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The manager signs and stamps the receipt and the purchaser must then take the receipt to the radio center where, for nine rubles, he can register his radio for three months. When the registration certificate is issued, it is stressed that permission is granted to listen to local broadcasts only. However, listening to foreign broadcasts is not officially prohibited, though people are not allowed to spread news contained in such broadcasts and, when listening, they close doors and exercise caution.

21. Persons who own radios are checked from time to time by employees of the radio center. These employees check to see whether the serial number on the radio corresponds with the number in the central file, whether there is an indoor or outdoor antenna and how long the antenna is, whether or not the set has been improved for listening to Western stations, etc. When the check is completed, the date of the check and the signature of the checker are placed on the radio registration certificate. Registration certificates are renewed at the post office, not at the radio center. The radio network (radio mazgas) is located in the Valstybes bank building on the corner of Pylimo, Graben, and Turgaus Streets. This is the point from which programs are transmitted to all loud-speakers in the city and in private homes. Source claims to know positively that the Klaipeda jamming station is located in this building. The station is operated by Russian technicians only. Administrative offices for the radio net are at Aleksandro Street (formerly called President Smetona Street).
22. Source believes that VOA broadcasts sometimes give incorrect information on the Lithuanian SSR and paint the picture there as being blacker than it really is. He believes that news about Lithuania should stress the general corruption and that facts given should be absolutely true and should be addressed directly to the people or to local Bolsheviks. The VOA was formerly heard at the inconvenient hour of 2:05 am. Now (May 1951) it is heard at 4:00 pm, but with more interference than was heard during the night broadcasts. It is difficult to hear the present broadcasts but they are audible and understandable. Source believes VOA broadcasts should be more frequent but is unclear as to the best hours for such broadcasts. In one interview he stated that the best hours for transmission would be 10:00 pm to midnight and 8:00 am to noon. In another interview, source gave 5:00 am to 9:00 am and 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm as the most favorable hours.

Newspapers and Books

23. Newspapers in Klaipeda include the Lithuanian language papers Tiesa, Raudonas Sviesmetis (Red Lighthouse), and Komjaunimas (Communist Youth), and the Russian language Pravda. Source also saw the Russian magazine Krokodil. Anyone can send reports to the newspapers and be paid for them. For example, if a person is certain that factory workers or a given factory brigade will fulfill their norm by a certain percentage or that they are willing to increase their production even more, he can send a report of this to the newspaper. Such a report will be published and the person will receive 45 to 60 rubles for it.
24. Source does not believe that the circulation of books is forced. They are mostly sold at bookstands and are comparatively cheap. A large book like Leninism costs 25 rubles and The History of the Communist Party costs ten rubles. The works of Pushkin cost 15 to 20 rubles. It is impossible to obtain any kind of publication from the West. There is a public library at the House of Culture near the Capitol movie house. Russian and Lithuanian books are available.

Hotel and Restaurants

25. Hotels in Klaipeda include the Baltic Hotel (Baltischerhof), the Victoria Hotel (which was reopened in 1951), and a hotel opposite the Capitol movie house. The Victoria operates only for prominent persons and prices are very high. Wine has to be bought with every meal there, but the wine itself is not very expensive.

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26. There are a great many restaurants in Klaipeda, including first, second, and third-class establishments. Prices in them vary. There are Russian and Lithuanian waitresses. The food and the serving of drinks of any kind is strictly controlled. There are also clubs in Klaipeda which can be visited only by the military.

Entertainment

27. There are two movie houses in Klaipeda: the Capital and the Teyvne (formerly called the Kammer). Movies are also shown in the Soviet Officers' Club on Raudonosios Armijos Street in the former National Guard building. Specially-equipped vehicles show movies in the country. Most of the films shown are Russian films and only a very few attend these showings. On the other hand, German and American movies are very popular. Movies in English include "The Tiger from Ishnapur", "The Indian Grave", "The Three Musketeers", "The Child of the Danube", and "The Count of Monte Cristo". In addition, there are Lithuanian cultural films which show Lithuania, particularly Vilnius, Kaunas, and their surroundings, in beautiful colors. Weekly newsreels are intended to impress the spectators and show the progress of Soviet reconstruction.
28. The municipal theater is open and is called "The Lithuanian Theater"; performances are in the Lithuanian language. The Russian theater is presently located in an enlarged gymnasium on Simano Dacho Street. Festivals and concerts are held there. There are no dance halls in Klaipeda, but it is possible to dance at the Victoria Hotel and in some of the larger restaurants, including those on Liebauer Street. There are no social clubs in Klaipeda.
29. Excursions can be made from Klaipeda to Palanga (55-56N, 21-04E), to Melnrage (55-44N, 21-05E), and to Giruliai, which is eight kilometers from Klaipeda. About 300 meters of the coast at Melnrage and at Giruliai have been released for swimming. The coast of Klaipeda near the Nerdermole is also released for bathing. The larger enterprises arrange excursions to these places, but the destination always must be fixed in advance. Sporting activities are very highly developed in Klaipeda. Most popular are light athletics: football, fistball (sic: handball or volleyball?), basketball, swimming, and boxing. Anyone can attend the games. New athletic grounds have been set up in the Strandvilla (Krantine) section of Klaipeda. There is no fee for using the grounds and they are always well maintained. National barriers are forgotten in these games, though sometimes sports are misused and become military exercises.

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Comments:

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1. [redacted] street names in Klaipeda are in Lithuanian and are on rectangular plaques.
2. This statement may merely result from an antisemitic feeling on the part of source.

Enclosures: A. City Plan of Klaipeda
 B. Waterworks and Power Plant Area of Klaipeda
 C. Power Plant Area

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